

**IN THE CLAIMS**

1-17. (Canceled).

18. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 20, wherein the inulin is chicory inulin with an average degree of polymerization ( $\overline{DP}$ ) of at least 20.

19. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 18, wherein the inulin is chicory inulin with an average degree of polymerization ( $\overline{DP}$ ) of at least 25.

20. (Currently Amended) A method for the treatment of ~~systemic~~ infections in humans or vertebrates comprising:

administering to humans or vertebrates having a ~~systemic~~ an infection caused by an invasion of the blood stream or lymph by Listeria or a pathogen selected from the group consisting of Clostridia, Bacteroides, Listeria, Candida and Salmonella, a dietary fiber a composition comprising consisting essentially of:

an effective amount of inulin as a sole pharmaceutically active ingredient and/or oligofructose to treat said infection; and

one or more pharmaceutically acceptable excipients,

wherein the composition is administered orally or through tube feeding.

21-22. (Canceled).

23. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 20, wherein the human or vertebrate is an adult human and the amount of inulin administered to the adult human ranges from 5 to 40 g/day.

24. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 20, wherein the human or vertebrate is an adult human and the amount of inulin administered to the adult human ranges from 5 to 25 g/day.

25-26. (Canceled).

27. (Currently Amended) A method for the treatment of an infection occupying the lymph or blood in humans or vertebrates comprising: administering[[,]] to humans or vertebrates having an infection caused by *Listeria* or a pathogen selected from the group consisting of *Clostridia*, *Bacteroides*, *Listeria*, *Candida* and *Salmonella* in the lymph or blood, a ~~dietary~~ fiber composition ~~comprising~~ consisting essentially of:  
an effective amount of inulin ~~as a sole pharmaceutically active ingredient and/or oligofructose to treat said infection; and~~  
~~one or more pharmaceutically acceptable excipients,~~  
wherein the composition is administered orally or through tube feeding.

28-29. (Canceled).

30. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 27, wherein the inulin is chicory inulin with an average degree of polymerization ( $\overline{DP}$ ) of at least 20.

31. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 27, wherein the inulin is chicory inulin with an average degree of polymerization ( $\overline{DP}$ ) of at least 25.

32. (Canceled).

33. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 27, wherein the human or vertebrate is an adult human and the amount of inulin administered to the adult human ranges from 5 to 40 g/day.

34. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 27, wherein the human or vertebrate is an adult human and the amount of inulin administered to the adult human ranges from 5 to 25 g/day.

35-36. (Canceled).

37. (Currently Amended) A method for the treatment of systemic infections in humans or vertebrates, comprising:

administering[[,]] to humans of vertebrates having a systemic an infection caused by an invasion of the blood stream or lymph by Listeria or a pathogen selected from the group consisting of Clostridia, Bacteroides, Listeria, Candida and Salmonella, a functional food composition comprising consisting of traditional nutrients and an effective amount of inulin as a sole pharmaceutically active ingredient, and/or oligofructose to treat said infection;

wherein the food composition is administered orally or through tube feeding.

38-40. (Canceled).

41. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 20, wherein the human or vertebrate is a vertebrate and wherein the inulin is chicory inulin with an average degree of polymerization (DP) of at least 20.

42. (Currently Amended) The method according to Claim [[20]] 41, wherein the inulin is chicory inulin with an average degree of polymerization (DP) of at least 25.

43. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 27, wherein the human or vertebrate is a vertebrate and wherein the inulin is chicory inulin with an average degree of polymerization ( $\overline{DP}$ ) of at least 20.

44. (Currently Amended) The method according to Claim [[27]] 43,  
wherein the inulin is chicory inulin with an average degree of polymerization ( $\overline{DP}$ ) of at least 25.

45. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 37, wherein the human or vertebrate is a vertebrate and wherein the inulin is chicory inulin with an average degree of polymerization ( $\overline{DP}$ ) of at least 20.

46. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 37, wherein the inulin is chicory inulin with an average degree of polymerization ( $\overline{DP}$ ) of at least 25.

47. (New) The method of Claim 20, wherein said composition consists essentially of an effective amount of oligofructose.

48. (New) The method of Claim 27, wherein said composition consists essentially of an effective amount of oligofructose.

49. (New) The method of Claim 37, wherein said food composition consists of traditional nutrients and an effective amount of oligofructose.

50. (New) The method of Claim 37, wherein the human or vertebrate is an adult human and the amount of inulin administered to the adult human ranges from 5 to 40 g/day.